

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LUSAKA 00709 01 OF 02 062156Z
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7777
INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY GABORONE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LAGOS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LILONGWE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 LUSAKA 0709

EXDIS

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV RH US UK
SUBJ: RHODESIA: TALK WITH MARK CHONA

1. SUMMARY: BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER AND I DISCUSSED THE SALISBURY SETTLEMENT AND SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING WITH PRESIDENTIAL ADVISOR MARK CHONA MONDAY EVENING. CHONA EXPRESSED GREAT SKEPTICISM ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT. HE DOUBTED WHETHER SMITH AND THE NATIONALISTS WOULD BE ABLE TO TRANSLATE THE PRINCIPLES INTO PRACTICAL REALITIES WITHOUT THE SETTLEMENT BREAKING DOWN AND SAID HE WAS CERTAIN IF THEY DID AGREE SMITH WOULD SEIZE POWER AGAIN WHEN IT BECAME CLEAR THAT ELECTIONS WERE NOT POSSIBLE (BECAUSE OF THE SECURITY SITUATION). THE SECURITY COUNCIL SESSION WOULD REQUIRE A REAFFIRMATION BY
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PAGE 02 LUSAKA 00709 01 OF 02 062156Z

THE U.K. AND U.S. OF THEIR SUPPORT FOR THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS. CHONA DID NOT SEEM TO FEEL THAT THIS WOULD REQUIRE CONDEMNATION OF THE SALISBURY SETTLEMENT BUT AT LEAST A STATEMENT BY THE UK/US OF THE INADEQUACY OF THE PROVISIONS OF THAT AGREEMENT. END SUMMARY.

2. AFTER CONSULTATION, NEWLY ARRIVED BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER

ALLINSON AND I DECIDED THAT, EVEN THOUGH THE TALKING POINTS OF THE FORMAL DEMARCHES HAD BEEN OVERTAKEN BY EVENTS, IT WAS IMPORTANT TO ESTABLISH CONTACT WITH ZAMBIANS AT HIGH LEVEL. WE THOUGHT IT IMPORTANT THAT THEY NOT FEEL IGNORED IN THE DIALOGUES THAT WERE GOING ON ABOUT RHODESIAN MATTERS AND THE SECURITY COUNCIL SESSION. I HAD HEARD FROM THE NIGERIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER THAT KAUNDA HAD BEEN IN CONTACT OVER THE WEEKEND WITH OBASANJO, REINFORCING OUR BELIEF THAT WE SHOULD TRY TO GET SOME IDEA OF THE ZAMBIAN'S VIEWS AND GIVE THEM OURS ON THE SETTLEMENT AND THE SECURITY COUNCIL DEBATE.

3. THOUGH ALLINSON HAS NOT YET PRESENTED CREDENTIALS, CHONA AGREED (AFTER CHECKING WITH THE PRESIDENT) TO SEE THE TWO OF US TO DISCUSS THE CURRENT SITUATION. IN RESPONSE TO OUR REQUEST FOR HIS VIEWS, CHONA REPEATED THE FAMILIAR DESCRIPTION OF ZAMBIAN ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE AAP, STARTING WITH SKEPTICISM THROUGH THE ASSURANCES FROM PRESIDENT CARTER AND PRIME MINISTER CALLAGHAN WHICH LED TO ITS ACCEPTANCE, THEN PRESENT SUPPORT AND THE "STRANGE SILENCE" SINCE MALTA. HE SAID ZAMBIA WAS NOW PREPARED TO REENTER THE DISCUSSION ON THE SIDE OF THE AAP.

4. CHONA COMPARED WHAT HE UNDERSTOOD TO BE THE SALISBURY SETTLEMENT WITH THE KISSINGER PLAN. IF TWO MONTHS IN GENEVA HAD PROVED THE LATTER UNSATISFACTORY, HE WAS CERTAIN THAT THE FORMER WOULD BE EVEN MORE SO. HE REPEATED PRESIDENT KAUNDA'S PREDICTION THAT SMITH WOULD SEIZE POWER AGAIN IN NOVEMBER OR
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PAGE 03 LUSAKA 00709 01 OF 02 062156Z

DECEMBER OF THIS YEAR ON THE REAL OR IMAGINED PRETEXT THAT ELECTIONS WERE NOT POSSIBLE UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES (IMPLYING THAT THE PATRIOTIC FRONT WOULD HAVE INTERFERED SUFFICIENTLY TO RENDER THEM IMPOSSIBLE). CHONA CALLED ATTENTION TO JACK GAYLARD'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE SETTLEMENT IN SALISBURY IN WHICH HE SAID THAT INDEPENDENCE ON DECEMBER 31 WAS CONTINGENT UPON VARIOUS CONDITIONS HAVING BEEN MET UP TO THAT POINT, INCLUDING THE ELECTIONS. SMITH, SAID CHONA, WAS NOW TELLING HIS PEOPLE, AS HE HAD A YEAR AGO, THAT THEY COULD RELAX, HE HAD BOUGHT THEM ANOTHER YEAR, AT LEAST. THEY WOULD SOON BE INTO THE DRY SEASON AND THE INSURGENCY COULD BE CONTAINED. AT THE END OF THE YEAR HE WOULD STILL BE IN CONTROL.

5. CHONA SAID HE THOUGHT THAT IN SPITE OF THE AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE SIGNED IN SALISBURY IT WAS QUITE POSSIBLE, IF NOT HIGHLY LIKELY, THAT BEFORE THE DETAILS WERE WORKED OUT THE TALKS WOULD BREAK DOWN--THAT SMITH QUITE OBVIOUSLY BELIEVED THAT HE WOULD BE ABLE TO RETAIN FULL POWER WHILE THE NATIONALISTS WOULD INSIST UPON TRANSLATING PRINCIPLES INTO SIGNIFICANT POWER-SHARING. THE TWO WOULD PROBABLY NOT BE ABLE TO AGREE. I SAID I THOUGHT THIS WAS QUITE POSSIBLE.

6. CHONA SMILED THE SMILE OF TWELVE YEARS OF EXPERIENCE WITH SMITH AT OUR PROTESTATIONS THAT THE WORLD HAD CHANGED A GREAT DEAL AND SMITH HAD COME A LONG WAY WHETHER UNDER OUR PLAN OR WHAT HE HIMSELF HAD AGREED TO. THERE WAS NOT TURNING BACK. THE ONLY QUESTION WAS WHAT FORM THE FINAL SETTLEMENT WOULD TAKE. HIS SKEPTICISM WAS UNDAUNTED.

7. THE CONVERSATION TURNED TO THE NEW YORK SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING. WE SAID WE FELT WE COULD HAVE MADE GREATER PROGRESS WITHOUT THE MEETING BUT IF IT HAD TO TAKE PLACE, WE HOPED THAT CONFRONTATION COULD BE AVOIDED. IT COULD ONLY UNDERMINE COOPERATION BETWEEN US AND THE AFRICANS TOWARDS A SETTLEMENT, AND DAMAGE THE AAP TO WHICH HE HIMSELF ATTACHED SO MUCH IMPORTANCE. HE SAID THAT AS FAR AS ZAMBIA WAS CONCERNED, THE
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PAGE 04 LUSAKA 00709 01 OF 02 062156Z

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PAGE 01 LUSAKA 00709 02 OF 02 062157Z
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 LUSAKA 0709

EXDIS

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

IMPORTANT POINT OF THE MEETING (BY IMPLICATION, WHAT AMBASSADOR KONIE WOULD BE DRIVING FOR) WAS A FIRM REAFFIRMATION BY THE UK AND THE US OF OUR BACKING OF THE AAP. WE BOTH SAID THAT WE CONTINUED TO STAND BEHIND ITS PRINCIPLES. WE SAW NO PROBLEM IN THIS. BUT WE WARNED THAT IF THIS EXTENDED TO A CONDEMNATION OF THE SALISBURY AGREEMENT, WE WOULD HAVE GREAT DIFFICULTY. SOME PROGRESS HAD BEEN MADE IN SALISBURY AND WE FELT IT WOULD BE A MISTAKE TO DENY THIS. POLITICALLY SUCH A THING WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE AT THIS STAGE FOR EITHER OF THE TWO COUNTRIES. CHONA INDICATED SOME UNDERSTANDING OF THIS, BUT MADE CLEAR THAT AS A MINIMUM, IT WOULD BE NECESSARY THAT THE UK/US POINT OUT THAT THE SALISBURY SETTLEMENT FELL WELL SHORT OF WHAT WOULD BE A SATISFACTORY SOLUTION. WE SAID THERE WAS A DISTANCE BETWEEN
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PAGE 02 LUSAKA 00709 02 OF 02 062157Z

FALLING SHORT AND CONDEMNATION. WHERE ALONG THAT LINE WASHINGTON, NEW YORK AND LONDON WOULD DECIDE TO STAND WE COULD NOT SAY, BUT WE ACCEPTED THAT THE SETTLEMENT AS IT STOOD WAS INADEQUATE.

8. WE SAID THE IMPORTANT POINT WAS TO BRING THE TWO SIDES CLOSER TOGETHER, THEREBY GIVING CHONA AN OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS A CONFERENCE. CHONA DID NOT, HOWEVER, TAKE UP THIS IDEA.

9. I AM LUNCHING WITH CHONA BY MYSELF TOMORROW. IT WILL BE THE FIRST PRIVATE TALK WE HAVE HAD IN OVER A MONTH, DURING WHICH HE HAS BEEN ON VACATION. HE WANTS TO REVIEW THE MALTA MEETINGS AND SEE HOW FAR APART WE ARE FROM THE PATRIOTIC FRONT. I WILL ON THAT OCCASION DRAW ON THE SUPPLEMENTAL TALKING POINTS CONTAINED IN STATE 53341.

10. COMMENT: I AM NOT AT ALL CERTAIN THAT GWEN KONIE WILL BE AS REASONABLE AS CHONA WAS, BUT BELIEVE HE UNDERSTOOD OUR POINT AND WILL TRANSMIT IT TO THE PRESIDENT AND FOREIGN OFFICE FROM WHENCE IT SHOULD GET TO HER.
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